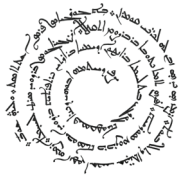
Jacob of Sarug's Homily on Palm Sunday



Texts from Christian Late Antiquity

5

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Fascicle 3

Jacob of Sarug's Homily on Palm Sunday

Translated with Introduction by
Thomas Kollamparampil

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bedjan	P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis* (see BIBLIOGRAPHY)
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
PO	Patrologia Orientalis

INTRODUCTION

INFORMATION ON THIS HOMILY	
Homily Title:	Homily on the Sunday of Hosannas
Source of Text:	*Homiliae selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis* edited by Paul Bedjan (Paris-Leipzig 1905, 2nd ed. Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), vol. 1, pp. 445-459. [Homily 18]
Lines:	304

OUTLINE

This verse homily starts with a prayer to the Son of God, the 'Fountain of life,' the 'New Well' and the 'Drink,' to enhance praising. Only to the extent of one's love can he comprehend the Lord and therefore the author requests the necessary word to narrate the grace of the self-abasement of the Lord. The homily narrates the profound benevolence of the self-abasement of the Son. The divine majesty brought itself down from the chariot and heavenly orders to a human womb and upon a borrowed colt in the streets of Zion. He is at the same time with his Father and with humanity, on high and in the depth, in majesty and in feebleness. The Mighty One came from the Father's house to visit us and by his own will reached the extremity of poverty. In order to reprove the might of the rulers by his humility he rode on the colt. While the elders refused to praise the benevolence of the self-abasement of the Son the young people, seeing the humility of the great King, repaid it (1–70).

The unfaithful and idolatrous Hebrew Nation engendered the double fault of refusal to praise and the attempt to silence the praisers. Since she was addicted to her shameful idols she became grieved at the arrival of her Bridegroom. Even though prophets have beaten at her high gates, she refused to be awakened. Hence, she was unable to open the gates to the King who had come. Since her heir, the Bridegroom, had come to unmask her, she was jealous and had wished to silence those who praised him. But the true praisers, both the heavenly order and the young people on earth were praising the 'way of the Son' full of wonder. But the 'Daughter of the People,' the Jews, the haters of Light and all good things, were jealous and furious to silence the praisers of the Son. In fact, he has in his place multitudes which cannot be silenced (79–170). Since, the Son of God has gatherings in

different orders praising him, if the children were silenced the stones would cry out. At that hour praise should come out from men or from other created orders. This is demonstrated from the happenings at Golgotha. In fact created natures never withheld praise to their Lord because his hidden symbol moves sun, moon, sky, land, forest, etc., to give praise in their own manners. They would praise the new road of the humility of the Son at Jerusalem. Since the young people praised him, stones did not need to bring out praise (171–274).

The homily admonishes the hearers to perceive the benevolence of the divine self-abasement and recognize the Mighty One on the humble road in the streets of Jerusalem. This recognition naturally stirs up praise. But humanity failed in praising its Lord, and it is well depicted in the unfaithful and idolatrous Hebrew Nation, the elders at Jerusalem, both were doubly culpable due to the failure to praise and the hindrance caused to the praisers. Jacob concludes the homily by drawing the contrasting picture of the unfaithful humanity that failed to praise and the unfailing faithfulness of Nature that praises the Lord always.

SUMMARY

Supplication to Christ, the Fountain and the Drink (1–16)
The Self-abasement of the Exalted-One (17–34)
The Humility of the Lord of Heaven and Earth (35–54)
The Praise Due to the Humble King (55–78)
The Unfaithful Hebrew Nation (79–122)
The Wonderful Way of the Son (123–142)
The Ungrateful Daughter of the People and the Hindrance to Praise (143–170)
The Hour of Praise Due to the Son of God (171–196)
The Demonstration of the Truthfulness of the Word of the Son (197–220)
The Unfailing Nature in the Praise of its Lord (221–258)
The Hidden Mysteries between God and His Creatures (259–274)
Thanksgiving to the Lord for the Renewal in His Coming (275–304)

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

SUPPLICATION TO CHRIST, THE FOUNTAIN AND THE DRINK

O Fountain of Life from which the dead drank and became alive, — Ps 36:9; Rev 21:6
flow yourself into me, and quench my thirst from your fountain.
O Drink that flowed into the thirsty earth and it [*earth*] produced fruit;
Let me drink from you and I shall call out openly how sweet you are.
O New Well which they have hewn out with the lance upon Golgotha, — John 19:34[1]
rise up and give me the drink for my mind which is in need of your fountain.
O Son of God who called himself 'Living-Water,' — John 4:10,11; 7:38
give me, that I may drink and when I shall be satiated from you let me speak about you.
O Fountain which descended from the height to the earth from the beginning;
with your drink let my mind bring forth fruits of praise to your Father.
Grant me (grace) to speak about you, not that I would comprehend you because you are incomprehensible;[2]
but let me preach to those who hear me because you are unattainable.

[1] Lit., 'swords' (*rumḥe*) using the word normally associated with the Cherub's flaming sword in Gen 3:24.

[2] Cf. Bedjan VI, p.178 [790]; Olinder, *Epistulae* no. 13, the incomprehensibility of the mystery of the Son is a basic theological presupposition of Jacob.

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ܐܠܐ ܐܒܙ ܟܒܥܒ ܟܕ ܘܠܐ ܩܡܙܘܩ׃

For who can attain to you so as to speak of you, O Lord, as you are,
apart from love, the story of which is superior to (the understanding of) human beings ?
As far as the extent of love, it will speak about your revelation;
give me word which narrates the splendour of your humility.

THE SELF-ABASEMENT OF THE EXALTED-ONE

From the chariot,[a] to the borrowed colt, young-one of an ass[b]
[a]Dan 7:93
[b]Matt 21:5; John 12:15

Your love brought you down, but who is capable of narrating your story ?
From that impenetrable legion of cherubim;
Ezek 10:1–22

the humble conveyance carried you in solemn procession into our country and how did it suffice you?
From the place of the wheels,[a] and presence[b] and wings of flame
[a]Ezek 1:16–20
[b]Exod 25:30

mercy[4] carried you and behold a young one of an ass carries you in solemn procession.
From that majesty of the throne that is fall of light,
Isa 6:1ff

to the smallness whose love is sincere with the children.
From that summit fall of revolving eyes
Ezek 1:18

(you have come) to this most despicable conveyance in the world.
From among the (heavenly) orders and choirs which exist out of the flame
to the small gathering that carries the branches in the streets of Zion.
Luke 19:28–40

Now how shall one speak who speaks of your story,
and in which place shall the mouth tell about you if it tells about you?

[3] Lit., 'from among the wheels.'

[4] In the Syriac text there is a word-play: the word *raḥmē* could be rendered in English as 'mercy'; 'compassion' and 'womb.' All such renderings hold sense here.

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Behold in the chariot your brightness blinds the heavenly beings
but feeble and ugly is the colt that carried you among earthly beings.
You are blessed by the moving of the eloquent wheels,[5]
and you are glorified by the branches of the palm-trees in the gatherings.

THE HUMILITY OF THE LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

You are above and beneath, and in majesty and in feebleness,
on high and in the depth below, who is able to speak about you ?
On account of us, Immanuel, you are like us.
and with your Father, because of Him, you are like Him.[6]
Behold the fiery cherubs bless you with their hovering
and the children too glorify you with their Hosannas.
Behold, all regions solemnly escort you in their own manners,
the height with its light and the depth with the branches that are from its trees.
Above He is mighty, held in awe by the flame
below (on earth) He is humble, clothed with all poverty
The watchers of heaven, with fiery lightning prepare His way
and the children of the earth spread before Him their mantles.
The Mighty One came from the house of His Father to visit our region
and by His own will He arrived at the extremity of poverty.

[5] Lit., 'wheels endowed with speech'; here it refers to human persons as the people around him called out *hosanna*.

[6] Cf. Bedjan II, pp.348–9.

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He who wears a royal crown asked for himself a colt to enter Zion — Luke 19:30
so that in His humility He might reprove the might of the rulers.
He destroyed the horse and chariot of the kings of Ephraim — Zech 9:10
and carried and brought peace to Zion which was in enmity.
He treated with contempt and refused adorned conveyances of potentates
and mounted on a colt in order to effect His journey in humility.

THE PRAISE DUE TO THE HUMBLE KING

The sons of the Hebrew nation saw the humility of the great King
and carried branches to extol Him when He was entering (Zion).
The elders denied the praise due to the King who had come to the land.
But the infants of the place were stirred by wonder, so as to give praise.
The young people have repaid the debt that the elders of the people had incurred;
and that praise which was required was restored there.
The priests and the scribes shut up their mouths and did not give praise;
the band of children joined up to make joyful shouts with their Hosannas.
"Blessed is He who has come in the name of the Lord," cried out the innocent ones, — Luke 19:38
and the road of the King who came resounded with a new praise.
The trees bent down to provide branches and to prepare His way,
for, it [*the way*] gave to the world the Sweet Fruit of the blessed vine. — Isa 65:8[7]

[7] Christ, 'the Sweet Grape.'

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The children wove a crown of praise when they were rejoicing,
for the Ancient of days[8] who became a child among their gatherings.
The Ancient of the ages came and became a youth in our region
and on account of this the young people were moved to give praise.
The prophet Zechariah carried his spiritual harp
and ran before Him singing and rejoicing in prophecy.
He touched its chords and excited its melody while he was singing: Zech 9:9
"Exult, daughter of Zion, shout joyfully and call out, for your King has come.
Behold, He has come and is mounted on a colt, the young one of an ass,
open your gates for Him who is coming towards you in humbly.
Exult exceedingly and rejoice and call out praise with raised voice, Zech 9:9
for, behold, He comes as I promised to you in the prophecy."

THE UNFAITHFUL HEBREW NATION

Zechariah had sung to the Hebrew nation that it might rejoice with Him
but the scornful bride did not dance, as it has been read. Matt 11:17; Luke 7:32
She was marred and became grieved that the Bridegroom had come,
and therefore she did not rejoice when she met Him.

[8] Cf. Dan 7:23, where, according to the Old Greek version, the 'son of man' is '*like* an Ancient of days,' thus allowing the identification of Christ as the Ancient of days. By contrast the Aramaic original and the Peshitta have the son of man going up '*to* the Ancient of Days,' implying that the Ancient of Days is the Father (thus Aphrahat, *Dem.* V.6; Ephrem, *HFid* 31:4). Jacob's understanding is frequently found in later liturgical poetry.

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ⵜⵜⵙⵎⵔⵔⵓⵏ ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵡⵉⵔⵉⵏ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏ ⵍⵅⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵏⵙⵙⵏ ⵙ ⵜⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ⵵
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ⵜⵜⵎⵎⵓⵔ ⵅⵓⵔⵔⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏ ⵜⵜⵙⵎⵔⵔⵓⵏ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏ ⵜⵜⵙⵎⵔⵔⵓⵏ ⵙ ⵜⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ⵵

Her heart was captivated by her beloved calf and was held up by it — Exod 32:4
and she did not hear when the prophet said to her, "Rejoice."
She became tied up with the shameful four-faced idol — 2 Chron 33:7[9]
and she was not able to open the gates to the King who had come.
She was anxious to serve her small idols
but for the service of praise to her Lord she was not solicitous.[10]
She adored the totem pole and for Tammuz she made lamentation.[11]
she loved Malcom[a] and offered up sacrifices to Baal,[b] her companion. — [a]2 Kgs 11:7[12] [b]Deut 4:3; 1 Kgs 16:31–32[13]
She openly worshipped Saturn and Chemosh[a] and Ashima[b] — [a]1 Kgs 11:5–7[14] [b]2 Kgs 17:30
and to the gods of all gentiles she made feasts.
She was addicted to the Egyptian idols;
and she was not able to sing praise together with the disciples.
She had begun to prepare offerings to demons;
and she did not go out to carry the branches along with the children.
Children were blessing and praising the King who had come; — Matt 21:15,16; Ps 8:2
but the old woman of idolatry was polishing her idols, in order to renovate them.
Prophets were beating at her high gates and awakening her;
but she was sleeping with her many beloved companions.

[9] Peshitta.
[10] Ephrem explains the unfaithful nature of the Daughter of Zion in *HCrucif* 1.
[11] Tammuz is a pagan deity, cf. Ezek 8:14.
[12] Albert, *Juifs*, IV 55, V 188.
[13] Albert, *Juifs*, III 148, 336; IV 53.
[14] Albert, *Juifs*, IV 54.

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ܕܪܚܠ ܐܡܪܢܐ ܫܘܟܢ ܐܦܝ ܡܨܒܐ ܐܘܒܐ: 85
ܐܠܐ ܒܪܐ ܐܘܒܐ ܐܒܠܝܣ ܐܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܘܐܠܗ.
ܟܠܝܬܘܢܐ ܫܪܒܐ ܐܘܒܐ ܟܡܒܒܐ:
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ܟܬܒܒܐ ܡܨܒ ܫܡܐ ܐܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܡܢܐ. 90
ܟܒܐ ܐܒܒܡ ܐܠܒܒܐ ܡܟܝܐ ܡܟܝܐ:
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ܟܒܢܐ ܫܪܘܐ ܟܠܐ ܐܘܒܐ ܟܡܒܒܐ: 95
ܐܠܐ ܒܒܒ ܐܘܒܐ ܐܠܟ ܫܒܐ ܟܡ ܢܟܬܘ.
ܠܟܢ ܟܬܓ ܟܡܒܒ ܟܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܘܐܠ:
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ܐܒ ܒܒܐ ܟܢܒܐ ܢܒܢ ܐܫܟܡ ܟܐ. 100

"Exult, daughter of Zion,"[a] but the comrade of the calves did not exult
for she was grieved that the Heir of the Father had come to her.[b]
She knew Him, for He was unmasking her and she hated Him;
then she was not pleased that He should be praised by the children.
In her heart there was jealousy and she remained dumb and silent of praise,
and she was eager to silence the praisers.
She was neither able nor wanted to praise
and she was diligent to stop the praise of others as well.
They were praising and she was angry on account of their chants
and threatened to silence them from praise but they were not silent.
Isaiah called out, "Wake up, be stirred, and put on strength,"
and Zechariah called out, "Exult much and be glad because your King has come."
The children called out, "Blessed is He who has come in the name of the Lord,"
and praise resounded abundantly on the way of the King.
But the Hebrew nation was not willing to hear them,
nor Isaiah, nor Zechariah or the children either.
She [*the Hebrew nation*] was not giving heed either to the prophets or to the young people
but she was annoyed and angered at their chants.
She was very anxious to silence them thoroughly in her obstinacy
and sought pretexts by all means to silence them.
But the praisers did not stop from praise
because the manifest truth moved them to give praise.

[a]Matt 21:5; John 12:15
[b]Matt 21:38 *et par.* Gal 4:7
Matt 21:15,16; Luke 19:39
Isa 51:9
Zech 9:9
Matt 21:9

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THE WONDERFUL WAY OF THE SON

The way of the Son was a wonder to those who discern.
The praise of the worlds and their inhabitants is too little for Him.
The legions of Michael, who saw the Son mounted on a colt
in the streets of Zion, were standing in great wonder.
The supernal beings looked on and saw the Only-Begotten,
who is humble and silent among the gatherings of the earthly.
The fiery beings were shaken, for, perchance He had descended from the Chariot;
and they all inclined to look into it [*the Chariot*], (to see) if He is there.
They had seen Him on the magnificent throne in His exalted place; Ezek 1:26
and they saw Him again that He is the One who is mounted on the young one of an ass. Matt 21:5
The angels wondered as they gazed on Him in two places
in heaven and on earth, He was not two (persons) but One (only).
They gazed on Him by whom the throne had not been vacated;
yet they were seeing Him among those who were singing 'Hosannas.'
He who was riding on Cherubs rode on a colt, and it was a wonder
that He who dwells in heaven then journeys on the earth and is not divided (into two).
Amidst the heavenly beings lightnings of fire lie prostrate on His way
but among the earthly beings He was honoured by the branches of the palms. Mark 11:8; John 12:13
Cherubs tremble to bless Him in His exalted place
and the young people praise Him on the earth with their Hosannas.

451 ܐܘܩܢܘܡܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܒܪܝܬ ܟܠ ܒܪܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܗ:
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125 ܠܡܪܝܡ ܘܠܡܢ ܕܝܬܒ ܥܠ ܟܘܪܣܝ ܘܠܡܪܒܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܠܥܡܪ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ:
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ܘܐܬܝ ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܘܢܬܪܘܡܡ ܒܫܡ ܕܐܒܘܗܝ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ:
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130 ܕܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܕܥܒܕ ܥܘܠܐ ܒܫܡܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܘܟܠ ܒܪܝܬܐ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ ܘܒܐܪܥܐ ܘܒܝܡܐ ܘܟܠ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܕܥܒܕ ܥܘܠܐ ܒܫܡܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܘܟܠ ܒܪܝܬܐ ܕܒܫܡܝܐ ܘܒܐܪܥܐ ܘܒܝܡܐ ܘܟܠ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܕܥܒܕ ܥܘܠܐ ܒܫܡܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ
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135 ܘܣܓܕܘ ܠܡܪܝܡ ܘܠܡܢ ܕܝܬܒ ܥܠ ܟܘܪܣܝ ܘܠܡܪܒܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܠܥܡܪ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ:
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140 ܘܢܦܠܘ ܐܣܝܛܬܐ ܕܩܕܡܐ ܘܩܠܘ ܩܕܡ ܐܒܗ ܘܣܓܕܘ ܠܡܪܝܡ ܘܠܡܢ ܕܝܬܒ ܥܠ ܟܘܪܣܝ ܘܠܡܪܒܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܠܥܡܪ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ:
ܘܐܪܒܥ ܚܝܘܬܐ ܕܩܕܡ ܟܘܪܣܝܐ ܘܩܕܡ ܐܪܒܥ ܚܝܘܬܐ ܘܢܦܠܘ ܩܕܡ ܟܘܪܣܝܐ ܘܣܓܕܘ ܠܡܪܝܡ ܘܠܡܢ ܕܝܬܒ ܥܠ ܟܘܪܣܝ ܘܠܡܪܒܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܘܠܥܡܪ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ:

THE UNGRATEFUL DAUGHTER OF THE PEOPLE AND THE HINDRANCE TO PRAISE

But the 'daughter of the people'[15] was jealous and furious when He was
Praised and she was eager that the praise should be silent from all mouths.
She was not in agreement either with the heavenly or with the earthly,
because they were praising the way of the Son which was full of wonder.
She laboured much to silence the praisers
and since their mouth was full of truth they could not be silenced.
The elders of the (Jewish) people were envious at the children and at their Hosannas;
and the priests murmured, and the scribes complained about their voices.
The watchers praised the Son in His exalted place,
and on the earth the simple youth together with the disciples.
The Jews who hate all good things dared
and approached Him and persuaded Him to silence them.
"Are you not hearing what they call out," they were asking Him — Matt 21:16
as if he received borrowed praise which is not His own.
He was being glorified from the abundance of His great glory
and they were jealous about Him as if He had snatched away the praise of others.
A small portion of His glory they called out through Hosannas
and the scribes were jealous as if He had never possessed glory.

[15] i.e. 'Hebrew nation,' 'the Synagogue,' etc.

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They were asking Him, "Tell (them) to keep silent from praising." Luke 19:39
as though, if the children were to keep silent, His praise would come to an end.
O Jews, haters of light, how can they be silent[16]
from His praise with which the heaven and earth are filled ?
Behold, if you make silent the young people who carried the branches,
behold, He has multitudes in His place which cannot be silenced.
Myriads upon myriads of heavenly beings
behold, praise Him and who can make them silent?
Even if it is easy to silence this small gathering
who will command that legion of Gabriel and companions ?

THE HOUR OF PRAISE DUE TO THE SON OF GOD

They were asking Him to say that they should keep silence, but He answered them,
"If they keep silence, the stones shall call out to praise." Luke 19:40
And thus it is, as the one who teaches the truth spoke,
that, if they had become silent, the stones would have spoken, as He had said. Luke 19:40[17]
It was the hour in which glory to the Son was due
and if they withheld it from Him the stones would have repaid praise.
If the children with the branches of the palm-trees had not praised,
solid rocks would have praised him with their harps.
The Lord of kings was riding upon a colt, the young one of an ass;
and Nature was stirred so as to give praise on account of His humility.

[16] Lit., 'cease.'
[17] F. Rilliet, "La louange des pierres," pp. 293–304.

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ⵍⵍⵉ ⵙⵙⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⵓⵏ ⵍⵍⵉ ⵜⵜⵓⵏⵏⵉ ⵙⵙⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⵓⵏ⵽
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ⵍⵍⵉ ⵙⵙⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⵓⵏ ⵍⵍⵉ ⵜⵜⵓⵏⵏⵉ ⵙⵙⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⵓⵏ⵽
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And the priests and the Scribes and the leaders of the people were under
obligation to speak out that praise which was required.
Since the elders had withheld the praise that was due at the moment
the children cried aloud to give praise by their Hosannas.
And if they had been silent, praise would not have ceased there;
because the stones would have sung that praise with trembling.
(Created) Nature was eager to repay praise to its Lord
and if human beings had not spoken, the dumb beings would have spoken.
When the teachers proved ungrateful the simple spoke
and if they too had been silent there were stones to give praise.
At that moment praise could not keep silence,
either from human beings or from stones it should be expressed.
Creation wondered about the abasement of the Son of God
and it was anxious to give praise with raised voice.[18]
If the children had not shouted joyfully, the stones would have spoken,
then there was no means by which the praise would cease.

THE DEMONSTRATION OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE WORD OF THE SON

Who is now able to set us above the hidden things,
for if the stones were calling out praise as it was said,
Indeed, for us, the instructed, the word of the Son is true
that, as He said, the stones would have repaid Him praise.

[18] Cf. Bedjan II, p.591 (homily 53); Dumb natures became preachers.

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Now let us say to the person who needs some demonstration
that from the manifest things it is easy to learn about the hidden things.[19]
At the crucifixion as the praisers were silent
stones and rocks cried out the praise that was required. Matt 27:51
Instead of the disciples who did not spread in front of Him their mantles
the dead came out and gave Him praise with their harps. Matt 27:52
Instead of trees that did not sent forth to Him from their branches.
The sun concealed the beams of its light in order to honour Him.
Instead of the crucifiers who were blaspheming against the Redeemer
the opaque natures were praising Him in their own ways.
At Golgotha the friends fled and the haters remained behind,
and it was the hour to praise the Son who is crucified.
And because human being were silent, stones moved to praise
so that the crucified King might not remain without glory.
And through these things that happened at the time of crucifixion,[20]
it became revealed that if they had been silent, the stones would have spoken.
If the children with branches had not made praise there,
as He was praised at Golgotha, He would have been praised.
Clearly the word remains (true) for the hearers

[19] Cf. Bedjan VI, p.146 [758]; Ephrem, *HFid* 76:11–12; *HAzym* 4:1–7.
[20] Cf. Ephrem, *Comm. Diatessaron* XVIII.2.

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for, if they were silent, stones would have cried out, as it was said.

THE UNFAILING NATURE IN THE PRAISE OF ITS LORD

The (created) natures never withhold praise to the Lord
because the whole creation is moved by Him to praise.[21]
Both from the stones and from the woods it is easy that He would be praised,
because His hidden sign[22] moves the [*created*] natures to give praise.
Diverse creatures in their own manners sing praise
the rational and mute beings in their own various ways.
Sun with its light and with the rays of its heat,
as by nature, it gives praise by the course of its path.
Moon with its rising and with its swift transformations
rouses glory to the immutable Lord of the times.
The firmament, with its extent and with the luminaries set in order in it,
sings praise night and day to its creator.
The land and the seas with their high mountains and floods,
as they are created, give praise in their own ways.
All dense forests, and trees bearing fruits and cedars,
give praise daily with great wonder.
Heaven and earth are filled with His glory as it is written
and whatsoever is created whispers praise to its creator.
All His creations with their tongues sing the glory
but in what manner and how much, you can never hear.

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[21] Cf. Bedjan I, pp.267–99 [Homily "On the Son Who Squandered His Riches," ET from Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The True Vine* 5.4 (1994), pp. 11–37 (esp. pp. 12–13, lines. 15–40)]; Ephrem, *HEccl* 41:1.

[22] Cf. K. Alwan, "Le remzo," pp. 91–106.

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ܘܟܡܐ ܒܐܡܫ ܕܒܪܬܐ ܒܗܘܢ ܒ:
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The truth gives testimony that all natures praise Him,
but how, no one understands so as to speak.
Nobody knows with what mouth and with what voice
the earth sings praise to its Lord when it is required.
For David testifies that when He required, it [*the earth*] gives praise
and the elements also give praise by their natures.
Fire and hail, ice and snow, also the dragons, Ps 148
all depths and the earth and mountains and the hills too.
To these (elements) David was demanding praise as tribute Ps 148
so that he might offer praise to the creator from His creatures.
He urged the winds and whirlwinds to praise,
and if he was feeling that they did not give praise, he would not have urged (them).
By the Holy Spirit David was moved and he stirred up
the heavenly and the earthly beings for praising.
The sun and the moon and the luminaries that are in the sky;
the earth and the mountains and the hills and also the trees.
To all these David said: "Praise the Lord,"
and because he was knowing that they would praise Him, he roused them.

THE HIDDEN MYSTERIES BETWEEN GOD AND HIS CREATURES

'How, or in what manner do they give praise ?,'
Do not ask me, because it is too difficult for me to explain (it) to you.[23]
There are hidden mysteries between God and His creatures[24]
and He hears when they praise in their own ways.

[23] For corresponding views in Ephrem the limits of 'investigations,' cf. *HFid* 9:1; 33:5–6; 44:9.

[24] Cf. Narsai, *PO* 40, pp. 182/183 (lines. 321–322).

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The stones call out His praise when they are requested
and He alone knows how to hear their tongues.
Then they were prepared when He was carried about upon the colt,
to praise the new road of His humility.
As the youth carried the branches to give praise
it was not necessary that the stones should give praise then,
but if they who carried the branches had been silent,
with movements stones would have praised the King who had come.
And when the Jews were anxious to suppress His praise
He answered them that the stones would call out for Him.
They also called out, as He truly said
because there is no way for His praise to cease from the creation.

THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD FOR THE RENEWAL IN HIS COMING

O my Lord, the mouths of human beings praise you with their tongues,
and the dumb natures in their own ways sing your praise.
O my Lord, the whole of nature give thanks to you because it has been renewed by you,
for the whole of it ought to acknowledge with wonder, your humility.
The heaven worships you because you humbled yourself towards earthly beings
and the earth praises you because you are higher than the heavenly beings.
The redeemed gathering of the Church of the Peoples shouts joyfully to you, my Lord;
because you liberated her from the stumbling-blocks of vain idols.

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The daughter of the Arameans[25] exults on your day
and is glad with you;
instead the daughter of Hebrews became sad, treated
you with contempt and was angry.
Behold, the young people praise you with the
branches of the trees
and the voice of praise of the aged is mixed with that
of the children.
Behold, the shepherds and their flocks adore you
instead of that flock that crucified its Shepherd on
Golgotha.
Behold, the gatherings of the Peoples[26] in all places
bless you
instead of (the fact) that you were reviled by that band
of Caiaphas.
Behold, they call out to you, 'Holy, holy, holy,' in the
assemblies
instead of the gathering of the People[27] that had called
out, "He is guilty of death."
Behold, all voices from all mouths are singing your
praise
with all tongues, since you have stirred them up for
your praise.
Fiery Seraphs with awesome chanting of, 'Holy, holy,
holy,'
while being covered with your flame, stir up your
praise.
Glorious Cherubs who are bound to you by the flame
with great impulses bless your awesome Person daily.
Many thousands of heavenly beings sing your glory
without ceasing from the praise of their sanctification.
Behold, the virgin Church, whom you brought back
from the captors,
resounds in you, she is enriched in you, and rejoices in
you;

[25] 'Daughter of Arameans' is a title of the 'Church of the Nations.'
[26] 'Peoples' = Church of the Peoples/Nations.
[27] 'People' = Israel.

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ܗܐ ܡܠܐ

All are giving thanks to you because by your coming
everything is renewed;
you are blessed by all, to you praise from all tongues.

End of the Homily on the Sunday of Hosannas.

ﻛَﻼ ﻫَﺪَﻯٰ ﻟَّﻬُﻢ ﺑِﻤَﺎ ﻳَﻌۡﻠَﻤُﻮنَ ﻛَﻼ ﺇِﻧَّﻪُۥ ﻣِﻦۡ ﺭَّﺑِّﻚَ ﺗَﻨﺰِﻳﻞُ ﺍﻟۡﻜِﺘَٰﺐِ ﻟَﻔِﻲ ﺳِﺠِّﻴﻦٍ ۝

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